

# 2048

## A MANIFESTO

For The One State Solution In

# Israel & Palestine

Mahmood OD

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah - The Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

# 2048

## **A Manifesto for The One State Solution in Israel and Palestine**

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Throughout my whole life I've seen oppression, wars, killings, detention and discrimination from Israel towards Palestinians.

After the 2021 escalation, I've had enough. I decided to write a whole manifesto on how to solve the problem once and for all. So, I did.

But this is not just a manifesto. It's a call for resistance. A message of hope.

Resistance is a much-hated word amongst those who prosper and make fortunes at the expense of people's miseries. Yet it remains the only choice of the oppressed against their oppressors.

It's easy to lose hope when misery is so widespread. It's easy to rule out peace when war is the norm. It's easy to surrender when you're helpless.

Easy is also, in many cases, the wrong choice. A wise Jewish Rabbi once said: *"People do not choose between what's right and what's wrong, people choose between what's right and what's easy"*.

It was easy for me to write this book. As a matter of fact, most of it was written in 14 days (although there is always something to add). However, it wasn't easy for me to publish it. Throughout my hesitation period, there have been several escalations, hundreds of casualties, thousands injured and counting. A new government took power in Israel, the worst in its history in terms of people; convicted criminals. Whether it's fraud or hate crimes. And to be convicted of hate crimes in a state that was founded on hate is *quite something*.

Yet despite my hesitation and the likelihood that this scenario might never be fulfilled, the possibility of something good coming out of it encouraged me to move on. As with all writings of humans, this work won't be conclusive, and it isn't meant to be. I do however hope that this would form a contribution, even if a minor one, to a solution for a cause that I hold dear to my heart, like many others do.

# 1. Future Scenario

*"It's never been as good in the Holy Land as it is nowadays. At least not for the past 100 years.*

*The final steps of the '2048 Solution', labelled as the most important global peace process of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by many politicians, are taking place and the deadline of mid-2048 should be met without any delays. Israel and Palestine will officially be called The United State of Israel and Palestine, and all citizens will receive full equal rights with no discrimination on any basis.*

*Palestinian refugees who decided to return will get a time limited living wage and basic compensation, others who opt out to get full citizenship in a third party 'contributing country' will get a compensation package based on their country of choice. Both processes will be taking place gradually during the next 10 years.*

*The Jewish-Arab relations have seen tremendous improvement in the past 20 years following several peace promoting initiatives taken by both Israelis and Palestinians in the Holy Land and globally that eventually led to this moment.*

*Legislations concerning education and equality also helped in the process, but only following public demand and persistent work of several cross-party Arab and Jewish politicians, battling longstanding bigotry and hatred rhetoric, and instead bringing a message of peace and hope for all the people from all backgrounds.*

*Many locals are describing the vibes in the country as utopic, despite the remaining existence of minorities from both sides who oppose the solution.*

*Mass protests in support of the move have taken place all across the world following the announcement.*

*Current Israeli PM Meir Bergman - who is leading the historical process - has received many calls from state leaders and leading religious figures across the world following his announcement on the move, celebrating and encouraging his actions and contribution to the long-awaited solution."*



## 2. Introduction

Being brought up as a Palestinian in Israel, identity couldn't be more complex.

I'm a direct descendant of native Palestinians who lived in historical Palestine for hundreds of years. I personally know the names of my great grandfathers from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. I have internal refugee friends from Iqrit and Bir'im, two villages destroyed in 1948, who cannot go back to their villages that they were displaced from despite the fact that they're just miles away and within current Israeli territory.

My native city, Haifa, witnessed one of the biggest ethnic cleansing campaigns during the establishment of Israel. In 1947, Haifa had an Arab Palestinian population of 75,000 (Ilan Pappé', *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*). By October 1948, just over 5,000 remained. The ratio of Palestinian minorities (Christians and Muslims) has shrunk massively in comparison to Jewish migrants. Whilst Palestinians were being forced out of their homes, ships with Jewish migrants from Europe were arriving at Haifa's harbour.

During the past 100 years, we lived under the ruling of the Ottoman Empire, The British Mandate of Palestine, and Israel, following which we lived through military rule and civil rule. History is portrayed in different ways. To most Israeli Jews, 1948 was a year of independence. To Palestinians, it was the year of the *Nakba* – the catastrophe.

This is just a glimpse to the complex identity issue that is followed by many questions: What should I identify as? What state do I belong to? Who should own this land? Would I prefer to live somewhere else? And the list of questions goes on.

One of the main reasons to the identity complex is the fact that we're born into a dispute we inherited unwillingly and that we must deal with unwillingly. Should there have been no conflict or dispute, and should there have been total equality, fair civil rights and a genuine, full, non-supremacist democracy, things would have been completely different.

At the end of the day, you don't see anyone born in the UK - or almost every other country - question if they're British or not, at least when it comes to casual and official self-identification. Whereas many Palestinian Israelis (and some would refuse this term as well) always struggled with self-identification.

If you ask me, I quite frankly do not care as much about the identity as much as I do about justice, equality, freedom and human rights. Many people feel the same. You don't have a choice in what you're born as but you have a choice in what you want to be and in what values and principles you want to follow.

If the Zionist movement did not use aggressive means to control Palestine and instead gradually settled, merged and cooperated in a civil manner with its indigenous people, we would've most likely had a harmonious multi-cultural society that benefited from the new Jewish migrants of Europe and other nations and made Palestine / Israel a truly thriving, progressive and democratic force in the Middle-East.

I'm not going to delve too much into whether Zionism was solely a Western political tool that used Judaism as a cover for a different project or not. I'm interested in dealing with facts and finding solutions for them, because the fact of the matter is, there is a reality today and that reality must be dealt with.

The question is, how do we deal with it?

For the past 80 years, it's been through terror, fearmongering, hatred, racism and segregation. Full apartheid in some locations. The means were weapons, espionage, manipulation, psychological warfare. Did we get the desired the results?

No. The Jews still do not feel safe. The Palestinians are still deprived of basic human rights. The way consecutive Israeli governments have been dealing with it in the past 30 years have been through gradual expansion and stretching of a sensitive status-quo, with a Palestinian partner (PA) that helped them reach where they are. That's not how you run a country, let alone deal with the fate of 14 million people, which is approximately the total number of Palestinians and Israeli Jews between Jordan river and the Mediterranean Sea.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict had very few years that included any glimpse of hope in them, the rest were filled with misery for Palestinians and uncertainty for Israeli Jews.

Those few years - politically - were around the early nineties when genuine steps were being taken to reach a two-state solution through the Oslo Accords. However, the two-state solution has been dead for a while and there are no other solutions offered by those in power. Meanwhile the misery and uncertainty continue.

In this book, I will be sharing ideas and thoughts that can contribute to the establishment of a one state solution that will be for everyone, equally.

I will also be highlighting the main obstacles in the way that need to be eliminated, such as Israel's systematic racism, supremacy, administrative detention, house demolitions, the Gaza siege and more.

Despite Israel having the bigger responsibility, Palestinians have their obligations too. They have an obligation to understand that the conflict doesn't just involve them, that they're not the only losers, that constant victimization is not the route to salvation, that resistance is means not a goal, and that they must compromise as well, especially when it comes to nationalist ideology and identity.

More importantly, both sides need to give up some powers to reach a higher power: the power of unity.

This won't be the first time the one state solution would be proposed, some advocated for it and still do. My main aim in this book is to provide guidelines on how it *can* work, detailing the core problems and their possible, realistic solutions.

It's important to note that this book won't cover *everything* that needs to be done, but rather a general guide that I hope would point to the right direction.

Neither is this a rules only book, but rather one that includes the exposure to specific sensitive and controversial topics, ones that need to be highlighted, analysed and understood before simply setting out a rule for them.

For example, one rule or step can be the right of return to all Palestinian refugees - an enormously important step towards the solution, yet one that cannot simply be mentioned without context and a proper proposition which could lead to a solution accepted by both Palestinians and Israelis.

For that to work, basic understanding is required. The Zionist movement has worked hard to cover up all the atrocities committed by its founding fathers during the establishment of Israel, particularly in 1948.

Leading Israeli *new historians* addressed that period in a thorough manner and worked hard to unravel the real story. Most notably Prof. Ilan Pappé, who, in his book *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* unravelled that dark side of history with hard evidence that condemns the early Zionists for all the atrocities they committed. His book is not only valuable for the facts it includes, but for the highly ethical way Prof. Pappé combined the written and told historical facts simultaneously with what was happening on the ground at the time.

The attempt to reach a solution for the Israeli Palestinian problem requires historical and contemporary digging. There are many hurdles in the way, many fears to address and many common beliefs and ideas to debunk.

There's also a very bright future if we can overcome all these. Or war if we don't.

### 3. Prologue

There are many reasons not to write this book; from an Israeli perspective, the ongoing rhetoric is that there is no Palestinian negotiating partner, that Palestinians want to kill all Israeli Jews, that if Arabs get into power, there will be a second Holocaust.

From a Palestinian perspective, Israel always committed and still commits crimes against the Palestinian population on various levels; killing, detention, house demolishing, land grabbing and the list goes on.

How can you make peace with such people, on both sides, let alone coexist with them?

The fact of the matter is, reality far more different than what it is being portrayed in general. It has way more elements and it isn't one-dimensional, even in conflict zones.

Yes, Israel still commits crimes with impunity on a daily basis and many extremists on the Israeli side want all Palestinians gone. Yes, some Palestinians commit acts of violence against Israelis and extremists on the Palestinian side want all Israelis gone.

But guess what? Neither are going anywhere. Both sides are here to stay. Even if all hell breaks loose and many people on both sides decide to flee the country, many will remain, from both sides.

So, how do we deal with each other? How do we find the relevant solutions the historical problems? Who 'controls' the future one state? What would be its name?

This, and some more, is what we would be discussing in this book.

As with any major political dispute, the powerful force that is in control - Israel - carries more liability to provide solutions. That doesn't mean the Palestinians are exempt from liability, however the Palestinian authorities in Gaza and the West Bank are incomparable to Israel.

Infrastructure, state facilities, technology, military capability, finance are all incomparable between the two.

Therefore, trying to compare the two sides as if they're somehow equal is not just a distortion of the truth, but a complete migration from it.

However, people share similarities.

Everyone wants to be safe, free, have an income, live in a house, have equal rights, provide their children with good education and simply live in peace. Or, as in the words of Israeli poet Eitan Klinsky: "In Gaza and Sderot, children want to live".

The people who share these similarities have an obligation to work towards resolving this conflict, not only for themselves but for the generations to come.

I've realized not long ago that one of the biggest obstacles in reaching a solution is our approach towards debating it. Everyone from each side holds so many strong beliefs, convictions, stereotypes and presumptions. And each side is fully equipped with a barrage of facts - true and false - to support the aforementioned, which makes the debate pointless.

If we want to have a frank discussion and a truly an open debate to reach a solution, we must approach it with open minds and open hearts and put some of those beliefs on hold, at least for a short while.

One very effective way to do this is to play 'role reversal', where each side puts him or herself on the opposite side. In psychology, it is a therapeutic and educational method used to experience alternative cognitive styles, feelings and behavioural approaches. For this to work, you must gain some basic understanding of the other side; their core beliefs or ideologies and their view of history.

What is life like on a day to day basis for a Gazan child, or teenager, who has lived all his or her life under a siege? How do children in Sderot cope with ongoing threat of being bombed by rockets from Gaza?

I'm not suggesting for each side to stop believing in what they do, but to try and understand what the other person believes so that we can start collectively looking at what brings us together rather than what separates us.

At the end of the day, no two people will ever agree on everything, let alone nations. And you don't have to agree on everything to live in a multicultural, secure, fair and free society.

Throughout history and to this day, people have been misled and made to believe by mainstream media and career politicians amongst others, that the Israeli / Palestinian conflict is one of the most complicated conflicts to solve. That's a massive lie.

The whole conflict can be solved with one thing: Equality.

But to reach the stage of equality, one must establish basic understanding about the other side, see where equality is most needed and prioritize implementing it based on the level of its urgency, where appropriate.

It is important to note that the Israeli/Palestinian relations differ from part to part in the country. You have Palestinian citizens of Israel – the ones who currently live inside Israeli borders, some of whom internal refugees and all of whom have full Israeli nationality. You have the Palestinian citizens of the West Bank – many of which refugees that hold West Bank PA (Palestinian Authority) identity cards. You have the Palestinians of Gaza, most of whom are refugees, who have Gaza PA identity cards.

The severity of problems differ depending on where you're based; for Palestinians of Israel, it's mainly a struggle for social justice and equality. For those in the West Bank, add freedom of movement, access to water and electricity, not being shot dead without reason on any given day. For Gazans, add to all the aforementioned a siege that has been taking place for over 16 years with a majority of the population being unemployed and unable to go outside Gaza, even for basic necessities, and a constant threat of an all out war that can take whole buildings down and kill thousands within a short period of time.

Then you have the refugees living in exile, outside the 1948 borders, lusting to go back to their homeland that they were forced out of.

The details above were necessary to show that there are multiple levels of urgency in relation to problem solving, however in the core of it, it all boils down to justice and equality.

## 4. The Israeli Revolution

The mass-scale protests that Israel has witnessed following the rise of the ultra-right-wing government of Netanyahu, Ben-Gvir and Smotrich were never seen before in terms of scale, content and continuity.

For the first time in Israel's history, hundreds of thousands of Israelis gushed the streets to revolt against the government's legislative plans to curb the powers of the judicial system and place it under the mercy of politics.

Loud calls for refusal to serve in the army began to surface and later became reality. Many leading politicians and veterans labelled the events as Israel's lowest and most dangerous moment, more dangerous than the great defeat of the 1973 war with Egypt, when Egyptian forces took Israel by surprise and recaptured parts of Sinai, that Israel had occupied in 1967, later giving all of the peninsula back to Egypt following the countries reconciliation.

These events highlighted a deep-rooted split in Israeli society; radical messianic against secular democratic. But something was missing: the Palestinians.

Most Palestinians did not take part in the protests against the government despite the fact that they are likely to suffer more from it. This is not surprising; Palestinian flags were not welcomed by the majority of protesters, who were boasting about their military service and how patriotic they are. Some did sympathize with Palestinians, but very few.

Palestinian citizens of Israel were aware of this. Those who tried to participate were met with a cold shoulder. In one instance, one activist who was due to give a speech in a protest in Haifa, was asked to make amendments in her speech. A request that is not given to Jewish speakers.

Most of the protest slogans calling for democracy, civil liberties, freedom of speech amongst others, were the slogans Palestinians have been calling for since 1948.

The louder the protests got, the more ironic things became; people who contributed to the misery of other people for decades were raging because there was a threat that their lifestyles might get affected by legislations taking



place by the same enterprise they catered and protected; the illegal, radical, racist, supremacist settlement enterprise.

But then, why was anyone surprised? Isn't that enterprise part of the bigger enterprise? Was it not based on the same beliefs? Is it not ethnically cleansing the same people? Is it not implementing the same racist practices Israel was based upon?

The people who complained about the ultra-radical government were the same people protecting their illegal settlements, allowing their rabbis to preach hate, allowing them to attack Palestinians, burn their villages, crops, shoot them, harass them, torture them, swear at them, humiliate them and kill them.

In most cases, they took an active part in settlers actions in a meticulously planned course of action. Now that they started to taste some of their own medicine, they started to revolt.

But it's too late now.

That is, unless a different approach is taken, one that will be inclusive of Palestinians and includes an all-out solution that is viable for both Israelis and Palestinians.

## 5. About The Land

Palestine relates to the Philistines, who were historically the natives of Sdud (Ashdod), A'sqalan (Ashkelon) and Gaza regions. Israel is the second name given to prophet Jacob. The land during both these times was referred to as Canaan, in reference to the tribes and descendants of Canaan, Noah's grandson.

The name 'Shem' - *Shaam* in Arabic - which was given to the whole region that includes what now is Israel, Palestine and parts of Syria and Jordan, is believed to be named after one of prophet Noah's sons.

Everything is rather historical and holy, you see. It's so sacred for Jews because almost all the prophets sacred in Judaism were present there; Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Moses. The same with Christians, as it contains some of their holiest sites in Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem and it's believed to be the birthplace of Jesus. Also for Muslims, who used to pray to the direction of Jerusalem before Makkah, and where prophet Muhammad is believed to have travelled to during Israa' and Mi'raj. Christianity and Islam also believe in and honour the same prophets that Jews do.

And it isn't just important to followers of religion. Many non-religious people born in the country simply value it as their birthplace and home.

Historical Israel / Palestine / Canaan was inhabited by various indigenous tribes, peoples and nations from different regions of the world.

From pre-historic periods throughout the Canaanites, Israelis, Philistines, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Muslim periods and to this day.

There are indigenous people who have been natives for decades, generations upon generations. Many migrated and settled in this country throughout the years. Everyone is entitled to live, freely and peacefully with access to human rights that should really and truly nowadays be universal not just by words, but by actions as well.

## 6. We're All Losers

Some of us less than others. But in the bigger picture, we all are at the end of the day.

And the 'loss' is not merely about the number of casualties on each side, it's the loss of a lifetime in peace, and we only have one life on this earth.

In Israel/Palestine, none of us tasted life in peace in our homeland. It's life in an ongoing conflict. Life while conflict status-quo is 'being managed'.

There's even a term used in Israel nowadays whenever there's an escalation in violence called "Mabam", which consists of three Hebrew words that represent the initials for "battle between battles" – *maarakha bein maarakhot*. That's supposed to be the norm, living life from battle to battle, escalation to escalation, from war to war.

Minimising the amount of rockets Gazan resistance movements fire on Israel by implementing temporary deals brokered by third parties, instead of having non-conditional direct talks with your biggest threat. Building billions worth of walls and fences to prevent tunnels from reaching Israel instead of opening borders so people can move freely, bring more prosperity to both sides and benefitting them financially, culturally and even politically, thus reducing the risk of escalation as it may negatively affect those benefits. Spending next to 1 Trillion USD on military expenditure (since Israel's establishment) and still failing to bring peace, both to Jews and non-Jews.

It's absurd, and what's even more absurd is the fact that none of this is being highlighted enough. At the end of the day, it's taxpayers money the government is spending here.

In Israel/Palestine, people have been accustomed to living life this way because it always has been this way, however this totally isn't normal and it needs to come to an end.

People – who are the crucial element here – on both sides mustn't be subject to repeatedly failing political agendas, mainly on the Israeli side, but on the Palestinian side as well.

And whilst it is very tempting – and quite normal – for the powerful side not to concede for as long as it can, it certainly isn't the wise thing to do, especially with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is attributed to Ben Gurion, the first Israeli PM and one of the biggest founders of the state of Israel, that he once said, referring to the Palestinians: *"The old will die and the young will forget"*. He was right with the first part, but he got it totally wrong in the last part.

If anything, the new Palestinian generation is more persistent in the struggle for peace and justice, especially for Palestinian refugees.

## 7. Refugees

During the 2006 Lebanon War, two thirds of Haifa's citizens – mostly Jews - fled the war to the south or abroad. If Haifa had been conquered and declared part of Lebanon or an independent Palestinian federal state and its previous citizens were prevented to return to it, what would they and the international community think about that?

Would they accept being misplaced with no right to return to their homes, families, neighbours, jobs, lifestyles and daily routines? Would they accept staying where they are or seeking refuge in another country without full civil rights? And no compensation for what they went through?

I highly doubt so. In fact, I think they'd fight for their right to return to Haifa in every way possible. So would I.

And that's exactly the case with all Palestinian refugees. Ordinary people who went about their lives and feared for their families and loved ones. They fled the war in 1948 and were forcefully evicted under imminent risk of life and intimidation whilst being promised they could return. Many of them still have their old, big house keys to this date.

In 1948, over 700,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes or fled following constant threats, terrorist attacks and massacres during the implementation of Plan Dalet (the letter D in Hebrew – a plan to ethnically cleanse and occupy Arab majority towns and villages in Palestine) carried out by the Zionist gangs at the time.

If the letter D stood for anything, it must have been Diabolic.

In 1967, a further 300,000 Palestinians fled their homes in a similar manner.

Several generations later, Palestinian refugees still lust to return to their homeland and birthplace. The 1 million refugees became over 7 million now.

The irony is, according to Israeli Law of Return, any Jew can become a citizen of Israel and perform 'Aliyah'. This law gives extensive priority to Jewish people to migrate to Israel and at the same time limits the ability of non-Jews, and prevents Palestinian refugees, to return. This extreme injustice and the lack of

action towards it from the international community breeds feelings of hostility, hate, mistrust and significantly strengthens the Palestinian narrative. There is direct and blunt discrimination, and nothing's being done about it. But something *can* be done about.





*(C. Issam Rimawy / APA Images and Russia News Today)*

Earlier in 2021, the Israeli Knesset prevented the extension of the 2003 Citizenship Law banning Israeli Palestinians who married Palestinians living in the PA (either West Bank or Gaza) from reuniting with their families, bringing them to Israel and getting them naturalized.

It passed for political purposes, as the Likud party voted against the extension to put more pressure on the new Israeli coalition and attempt to take them down, whereas during every term they were in power they voted in favour of extension. However, this did not change the result.

If some of these families would be able to reunite, and some of whom are refugees, there can be a more thorough solution to their problem. It will be on a much larger scale, one that holds such a magnitude that it could become one of the main pillars of the conflict resolution between Israelis and Palestinians.

Here's how it would go:

### **The 10 Year Plan**

Palestinian refugees would be offered a right to return to their homeland, to their houses where they still exist and can be refurbished or to a replacement home should their houses have been demolished, either at a relevant place of choice or close to where they initially were. In most cases it would be a replacement home as there have been dramatic structural changes since the establishment of Israel. Their compensation would be limited by the value of their previous property plus inflation and could be implemented in monthly instalments for a limited relevant period, rather than an outright payment as this would be very difficult economically.

Another option in terms of housing will be monthly support for a limited period of time during which the refugees are settled and are economically active. This would help them get back on their feet, establish themselves and be economically independent.

The third choice for the refugees is to have a second home abroad or full citizenship in their places of residency.

### **The Maths:**

If - for arguments sake - each of the 7 million (or so) Palestinian refugees who are outside Israeli and PA territories receives a financial compensation of \$10,000 alongside their full citizen rights and right of return where they chose to, we're talking about a total compensation package worth 70 billion USD. Divide the plan to 10 years, that would make it 7 billion USD per year, which is more than doable by Israel on its own, that had a military expansion of over 20 billion USD per year since 2017 (<https://tradingeconomics.com/israel/military-expenditure#:~:text=Military%20Expenditure%20in%20Israel%20averaged,370%20USD%20Million%20in%201953.>)

In 2005 Israel evacuated 8,900 settlers from several settlements in Gaza during the disengagement. This cost Israel 2.5 billion USD. That's 290,000 USD per settler, excluding unemployment support and income support. (<https://www.calcalist.co.il/local/articles/0,7340,L-3398921,00.html>)



There would also be several countries more than willing to chip in to boost any proposed compensation package alongside private donors to take into consideration.

Furthermore, when you bring in new refugees, just like when the Zionist movement was shipping Jews out of Europe, you create new communities that create new economic systems that benefit the country as a whole, let alone new skills and additional workforce.

All in all, financially speaking so far, it's very doable. But there's one big problem, and there's a dedicated chapter for it.

## 8. The Demographic Threat

Throughout its establishment and until now, Israel perceives the native Palestinian population as a demographic threat. The Dual-National state as an end-of-days scenario. The prospect of having any refugees back as a doomsday to the Jewish state. But is it?

Before Judaism became an ethnicity, it has always been around in its pure form: a religion.

Arab and non-Arab Jews, Muslims and Christians lived peacefully through many centuries. In fact, apart from the initial conflict the Jews and Muslims of Hijaz had in the early years of Islam and during the Almohads (Al-Muwahhidun) Caliphate, there were hardly any problems of any significance until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Zionism started actively persuading Jewish people to migrate and settle in Palestine and establish a 'Jewish State' in the heart of a non-Jewish country.

A quick note here; this migration started taking place way before The Holocaust. And Zionism was established even further back in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Arabs felt threatened not only by the amount of Jewish people settling in and the amount of land being taken to settle them, but rather the outspoken public talk of establishing a pure 'Jewish State' where the Arabs rights and status remained unclear.

This obviously led to increased tensions between the two groups and various riots and attacks took place from both sides.

The escalation reached its peak after the 1947 UN partition plan for Palestine or Resolution 181, that split the land between Arabs and Jews in an almost impossible manner, where the two states would be interconnected and both sides would have semi-landlocked territories on the other side (see map).



The majority of the countries who voted for the plan had nothing to do with it; no borders, no affiliation and not even basic connections. All the countries that had direct borders and historical connections with it voted against.

The Zionist acceptance of the plan was tactical; the movement did not suddenly give up its ambitions of having a state on all historical Palestine and beyond (Euphrates to The Nile, some of them say) but rather a starting point.

During the initial proposals of a partition during the 1930s, there have already been talks from Ben-Gurion about the Arab demographic threat that would prevent a strong Jewish majority and the potential transfer of Arabs to other areas. In his letter to his son in 1937 he stated: *“we must expel Arabs and take their place.”* (IPS / Ben Gurion 1937 Letter -

<https://www.palestineremembered.com/download/B-G%20LetterTranslation.pdf>).

Not only Ben-Gurion’s letter to his son included written evidence of detailed planned actions to expel Arabs out of their homes. Yossef Weitz, the previous director of the JNF (Jewish National Fund) stated in his diary that he has *“drawn up a list of Arab villages which in my opinion must be cleared out in order to complete Jewish regions. I have also drawn up a list of land disputes that must be settled by military means.”* (Weitz Diary, 18 April 1948, p. 2358, [Central Zionist Archives](#), Jerusalem)

During the establishment of Israel in 1948, over 700,000 (85% of the Arab population of what became Israel) Palestinians were forced out or fled their homes due to war, terrorist acts, massacres and direct threats. A further 300,000 would follow during the 1967 war.

This was a direct act of ethnic cleansing based on ideology and belief that perceives the Arabs as a demographic threat. And it didn’t stop there.

To this date, Palestinian natives are facing daily harassment, violence and abuse to force them out of their homes as part of an ongoing strategy. Take Sheikh Jarrah in Jerusalem for an example, where families are under the constant threat of being expelled from their homes, or the Bedouin Arabs of the Naqab (Negev) south of Israel, who repeatedly get expelled from their villages and have them destroyed.

All these actions that are still taking place prove that the ethnic cleansing is still here.

But it needs to go because it's wrong on every level. The sooner decision makers realize this the merrier.

The problem here is, the people who face this on a daily basis would hardly believe there is any opportunity for a large-scale solution. They'd probably take it as a joke.

However, it sure is still possible. At the end of the day, we're talking about the same state that – regardless of the reasons behind it – evacuated Jewish settlements from Gaza during the disengagement in 2005.

Remember the proposed (for arguments sake!) \$10,000 compensation per Palestinian refugee? And the 2.5 Billion USD to evacuate 8,900 Jewish settlers?

To simplify matters; when it comes to Israel, if there's a will, there's a way. Even if a large proportion of the public is avidly against something (and there always is), the state can still go ahead with it and get away with it.

During the days of previous Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin and not long before his shady assassination, the general speech in Israel included elements of hope, peace-seeking and openness to the other side, despite the fact that this was during a peace process that was leading to the two-state solution, which is now clinically dead.

Instead of looking at Arabs as a demographic threat, Israel should view Palestinians, in their entirety, as their biggest blessing.

## 9. The Demographic Blessing

Throughout its history Israel viewed its Palestinian Arab population as a demographic threat. By viewing them that way, they automatically made them their biggest problem.

And what do you do with your biggest problem? You solve it.

Should the Palestinians in the entirety of Israel/Palestine have true, total equal rights to Jewish Israelis, the situation would be completely different:

- 1) They won't be able to play the victim role anymore because they won't have any justified excuses, as they do now.
- 2) Israel would benefit economically on an even larger scale by utilizing an even larger workforce and save costs.
- 3) The more the Palestinians have equal rights to Israelis, the lesser the security threat.
- 4) Minimising security threat results to growth and development in several areas.
- 5) Wellbeing on both sides will improve.
- 6) Israel won't have to worry about boycotts anymore, because there won't be any reason to, leading to thriving business in the West Bank / Judea and Samaria.

Palestinian citizens of Israel already contribute massively in various industries: technology, science, agriculture and very predominantly in healthcare where they're ratio is almost double their percentage amongst the general population.

Imagine for one second that you included Gaza and the West Bank into the equation? No Jew will ever have to work on Saturday, neither on Sunday!

The Palestinians will become the biggest helping hand in Shabbat keeping.

Look at how Ukrainian refugees contributed on many levels in Poland following the Russian invasion;

1. Filling labour shortages: Ukrainian refugees have helped to fill labour shortages in Poland, particularly in the construction, agriculture, and healthcare sectors. Their presence has helped to reduce unemployment rates and contributed to the country's economic growth.
2. Cultural exchange: Ukrainian refugees have brought their own cultural traditions and practices to Poland, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and enrichment. This has led to a deeper understanding of Ukrainian culture and helped to build bridges between the two countries.
3. Language skills: Many Ukrainian refugees in Poland are fluent in both Ukrainian and Polish, which has helped to bridge the language barrier between the two countries. This has facilitated business and personal communication, and has contributed to a more integrated and harmonious society.
4. Entrepreneurship: Ukrainian refugees in Poland have also started their own businesses, contributing to the growth of the country's economy. Many have opened restaurants, cafes, and other small businesses that have enriched local communities.
5. Education: Ukrainian refugees have also contributed to Poland's education system by studying in Polish universities and bringing diverse perspectives to the classroom. This has helped to enrich the educational experience of all students and has contributed to the overall growth and development of the country.

Overall, Ukrainian refugees in Poland have made significant contributions to the country's economic, cultural, and social development, and have helped to build stronger ties between the two countries.

In Israel / Palestine, some of this already exists to a certain degree. An all-out-solution would only take it to new highs.

## 10. The Islamic Movement in the Israeli Government

Ever since Israel's establishment, the country's Palestinian citizens played an active role in the Israeli parliament – the Knesset. Sometimes more than others, whilst others opted out for ideological reasons.

In 2015, all Arab parties who are active in the Israeli Knesset joint together in one group: The Joint List led by Hadash, a political umbrella for the Israeli Communist party.

The move didn't come out of nowhere, as all political parties had different ideologies and views, from Communists to Islamists, however it was necessary following a move led by former Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who pushed for passing a law that increases the minimum percentage of vote share required for every party to hold for it to be able to get into the Knesset, a law that was mainly targeting Arab parties that just pass over the threshold in general when running the elections on their own.

The Arab parties (some of which include Jews) had to get over their political differences to avoid losing their voice in the Knesset and joined forces.

The move increased their MKs by 2 (the Knesset houses 120 MKs in total) in the first election following the unification, reaching 13 MKs belonging to Arab or Arab-Jewish parties, then peaking at 15 in the following elections in 2015 and peaking at 15 in 2020 following a short-lived split in a short-lived Knesset (they're all short lived as of recent, Israel had 6 general elections in 7 years so far!). During both periods, The Joint List was the third biggest political party in Israel. That, especially in a turbulent political atmosphere, meant it had a much bigger effect on day-to-day politics in Israel, and the potential of an Arab party joining the government in Israel for the first time in history increased.

This didn't happen. Rather, the Joint List split yet again, with Ra'am (the United Arab List) - led by the southern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel - splitting and getting into negotiations with PM Netanyahu on the possibility of saving his coalition from going down.

That didn't work neither, Israel instead went to its 4<sup>th</sup> election in 2 years that produced one of the most extraordinary and unlikely coalitions in the history



of Israel, gathering parties from left to right and for the first time in history, having Ra'am under the leadership of Mansour Abbas, as the first Palestinian/Arab party to join a government coalition in Israel's history.

Despite the collapse of the coalition, the party managed to serve the Arab minority with mainly increased budgets that support development in deprived Arab councils and towns.

Putting the political move and accomplishments aside, the act of having a Palestinian minority party enter an Israeli government coalition, with the backing of many Palestinian citizens of Israel is a manifestation of something greater than the move itself, which I will be discussing in the next chapter.

## 11. The Rise of The Palestielis

In the beginning of the book, I discussed the identity complex of Palestinian citizens of Israel. It stems from the conflict of exercising a national identity within a hostile state that is the complete opposite of such identity.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, an increasing number of Palestinian citizens of Israel started going back to their roots in defining themselves – Palestinians.

Early Zionists managed to de-Arabise the Jewish Arabs that they brought from Arab countries in the years following the establishment of Israel. They gave them new names and told them they need to ditch their original language. In a far more severe case, what is referred to as the “Yemenite Children Affair”, an estimated 1,000-5,000 children were kidnapped from their mothers in hospital and given to European origin families with new names and identities.

Where they succeeded with new-coming Jews, they failed with the natives. The Nakba surviving generation was still scarred by the horrors of that period, whilst the following generations stuck to their Palestinian identity with full force.

Despite this, Palestinians of Israel are at the end of the day *Israelis* by nationality. They have Israeli IDs and passports like all Jewish Israelis. They also constantly fight for equality, justice and the improvement of day-to-day conditions.

To fight for these causes you must be active on several stages, nonetheless the political stage.

Consequently, you can be a Palestinian in the form of identification and right to self-expression concurrently with being an Israeli citizen who practices his citizenship to the fullest.

Collaborating between the two proved to be – and still does – an impossible mission to some Palestinian citizens of Israel, however, even if you do not wish to admit it, you’re practicing it by default. The only way to become a non-Israeli at all is to revoke your own Israeli citizenship, and very few are willing to do that.

And if Palestinians can be Israelis at the same time, Israelis surely can be Palestinians at the same time.

They live in historical Palestine, the Ashkenazi ones of European origin got accustomed to the climate and even got a tan. They got influenced by the culture, traditions and use Arabic words in their day-to-day life. The Mizrahi ones already have Arab roots. All of them deal with Palestinians one way or another in their day-to-day life in most parts of the country.

Previous Israeli PM Golda Meir even once famously stated in a television interview *"I am Palestinian"*.

Although both Palestinian and Israeli cultures have their own attributes, the interconnection between the two is undeniable.

So what's stopping the two peoples from enhancing this interconnection, not solely to reflect one side's identity further but rather establish a more varied, open culture that is more absorbing than rejecting, more open than enclosed?

## 12. Toxic Nationalism

The Zionist movement established Israel on pure nationalism. The distinguishing factor between it and other nations is that the Zionist version of nationalism used the Jewish identity as a forefront to its nationalism, seeing as ethnically, hardly any of the new coming Israelis had anything to do with Israel, unlike native Jews of Palestine.

And since the Russians and other Europeans who established Israel had nothing to do with it, they had a big problem with anyone who did, most notably its own indigenous people – the Palestinians.

Due to constant attempts from the Zionist movement to deny the existence of a Palestinian peoples whilst simultaneously refusing to accept them as equal in their own state, the latter felt the only thing they can cling to is their roots to keep any of their pride alive. Add to that the fact that the struggle is ongoing, that blood is still being spilled, that concrete is still being turned into rubble, nationalism became the name of the game on both sides.

And whilst there is no problem in identifying as a person of a specific ethnic group or culture, there are several problems when that identification is combined with ethno-superiority.

Furthermore, a nation state must provide a true reflection of its inhabitants with all their differences. Otherwise, what would be the point of a nation state? A reflection of a “pure race”?

Well, that has been and still is practiced in Israel, and the results are horrendous. If one needs only one evidence of that, this would be the fact that Israeli officials at the highest levels still talk about Israel’s existential threat as a very real, possible outcome at some point.

Not long ago, former Israeli PM Ehud Barak expressed concerns about Israel’s existence as it comes closer to its 80<sup>th</sup> independence year, quoting the 8<sup>th</sup> decade curse with previous Jewish kingdoms. The same Barak said in interview with Gideon Levi in 1998: *‘If I were a Palestinian at a suitable age, I would have joined one of the “terrorist” organizations at some point.’*

So there is some understanding from Israeli officials about the Palestinian reality, especially in more deprived areas, and perhaps also a *hidden* empathy towards their struggle, the same one Jews had to go through in old and recent history.

Even though such struggles are charged by ethnic or religious belonging, they're aimed at those who commit injustice, whether that injustice is accompanied by demonizing certain groups or not. It's the injustice that people struggle against.

Hence why any Jew who holds basic understanding of the Jewish struggle throughout history is ought to understand the Palestinian struggle, regardless of race, ethnicity or religious differences and mustn't be blinded by the ultra-nationalist rhetoric that has been going on for so long.

## 13. The Palestinians Didn't Commit the Holocaust

The Holocaust did not happen in Palestine, but in the heart of Europe. It wasn't only Hitler who wanted to get rid of the Jewish people in Europe, but his European collaborators and supporters.

The Holocaust in France, for example, is a reference to the deportation of 75,000 and murder of 72,500 Jews by the French authorities between 1940 and 1944.

Poland and Hungary were known collaborators with the Nazi regime and, less publicly, Hitler had support and direct collaboration from Western and Southern Europe.

The Nazis weren't alone in trying to reach the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question" as it was called at the time. They had many supporters who have shown Jews hatred for thousands of years and were constantly trying to get rid of them, either by elimination or expulsion.

Whilst the Zionist movement was encouraging Jews from all around the world to leave their countries and go to settle in Israel, the Nazis and their collaborators committed one of the biggest atrocities in history, by mass murdering Jewish people in the heart of Europe, to show them that there is no future for them there and that the only hope for them is to go and live elsewhere.

The supposed safe haven at that time for them was Palestine, which was already being established as a national home.

Hostility towards Jews in Europe wasn't new. During the fall of the Arab kingdoms of Andalusia, they were expelled - alongside Muslims, following which they were welcomed to North African and Middle-Eastern countries under Ottoman rule at the time, with direct help from Ottomans and local natives.

Under different rules in Muslim and Arab countries, Jewish people lived in harmony and haven't faced hardly any hostility. In fact, many held key positions in government at the time.

## **14. Holocaust Denier / Nakba Denier**

What is the difference between them?

## 15. It Starts with Education, But Doesn't End There

If Rabin, who had participated in several bloody wars in his life, was able to change the general tone from an aggressive to a more peaceful one, surely others could do more than that.

Imagine Jewish and Arab schools implementing a 10-year plan that includes the other party's narrative about the conflict, without having the aim to debunk it. Just to read it, analyze it and understand it. Solely for the purpose of trying to get the other party's narrative. And you don't have to believe it all.

It surely won't bring peace the next day and may well be disliked and rejected by many, however it would open people's eyes to the views of the people they need to understand most. And it's in the country's best interest to at least try and discourage its citizens from becoming a bunch of segregated individuals living in their own bubble, believing every word they hear from the same people and thinking they're the enlightened ones at the same time.

Language should be the starting point.

In Israel, most Jews go to Jewish schools and most Arabs go to Arabic schools. It is compulsory for Arabs to learn Hebrew, however it isn't compulsory for Jews to learn Arabic, despite the fact that it's intensively used in the country and there have been calls to make it official rather than sort-of semi-official as it is now.

By teaching Jews Arabic from a young age, just as Arabs learn Hebrew, you open a whole new dimension and get deep insight into people's culture, beliefs, literature, day to day life and the list goes on.

This brings immense benefits with it, especially the fact that you would not solely rely on your language to understand what's going on, literally in your back yard, and how to deal with it and try to find solutions to it.

And I'm not suggesting for one second that the initial element in Jewish-Arab relations is suspicion. At least not everywhere in the country. But many of the Jews who learn Arabic at a later stage do so for 'security' reasons, i.e. if they



want to work in Intel or one of Israel's security forces that requires Arabic language understanding.

In large mixed cities that contain significant amounts of Arabs and Jews, such as Haifa, Acre and Tel-Aviv/Yafa, daily life is quite normal and in many places – especially work places – are quite harmonious.

People work together, eat together, celebrate together and mourn together. The human elements of daily life are extremely similar.

And although you may not get the same normality and harmony, more tense areas such as Jerusalem or the West Bank can still have places that have more normality than others.

In Israel, there are already plenty of mixed social and political groups that include both Jews and Arabs. Mixed schools are on the rise as well and more effort, resources and need to be put in these. Should there be proper government guidelines from the Ministry of Education for example, it would give boost to mixed schools or mixed school activities.

## 16. Normality in Jerusalem and the West Bank?

Yes, at least in some places. Don't get me wrong here: there are still checkpoints, barriers and a hideous massive wall that separates Palestinian families from each other.

There are also frictions, harassments, killings and terror acts. But that doesn't happen everywhere and all the time. It might not be the most comforting thing to say but at the end of the day, we are talking about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict here, and it surely isn't a light-hearted one.

I went to Israel / Palestine recently with my family to visit relatives and loved ones. During my journey I was in both Israeli and PA territories.

In one of these journeys in PA territories, we visited a tiny village called Nisf Jubeil in the municipality of Sebastia, Northwest of Nablus. It is one of the oldest inhabited villages in the area, where my grandmother's family owns a home and some land. It's one of the most magical tiny villages; plenty of hills, olive trees, old houses with mosaic, and a clean fresh breeze.

Home to some fascinating ancient archaeology from Canaanite to Byzantine times, it also has the Nabi Yahya Mosque, where John the Baptist is believed to be buried.

It was olive harvesting season and during our trip, we dropped a visit to a family picking up olives. I chipped in and tasted some of the olives (boy they're sour off the tree, but try them after they've been pickled the Palestinian way and don't look back). I was having a chat with the father of the family, Abu Rami, and asked him about the neighbouring settlements and if they have frictions with them.

He said they hardly had interactions with them and that they were generally peaceful, and that the more extreme settlers that attack villages and ruin crops are far away from them.

I found some similarities to Israel, where alongside mixed cities, you have other areas that are predominantly either Arab or Jewish neighbouring each other.

## 17. Areas A/B/C

The biggest difference between Israeli territories and West Bank / PA territories is the way they're governed.

The West Bank is split into what is called Areas A, B, C. This administrative split was following the Oslo 2 Accords and it deals with how governing is split in the West Bank.

Area C in full Israeli control, Area B is in PA administrative control but under Israeli security control and Area A is under full PA control, administrative and security combined. Ultimately however, Israel controls everything.

Which brings me back to Palestinian majority towns in Israel like Nazareth, Umm Al-Fahm and many more. What's the difference between them and PA controlled territories in the West Bank? Not much. Well, the flags and uniforms, but then still you have Palestinian Israelis who raise Palestinian flags inside Israel. So still, not much of a difference.

Yet the day to day life and basic human rights such as access to water, education and freedom of movement are day and night in difference between both areas.

Many Palestinians in Area C of the West Bank do not have access to fresh water and electricity (similar to some unrecognized Bedouin villages in Israel) and some of the Palestinian children have to travel miles and move between walls to reach school, on foot.

This is simply not normal, even if it's the daily norm for some people.

Which leads me to the next chapter, in the form of a question.

## 18. Do We Believe in Universal Human Rights?

One of the greatest ironies is that following the establishment of the state of Israel, The United Nations released the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights'. It was a document directed to all countries as a guidance towards policies concerning basic human rights of people.

It was a great effort that if followed, could bring immense relief to humanity.

Here are some of them of the Articles:

*Article 1: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."*

*Article 2: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty."*

*Article 3: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."*

*Article 5: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment"*

*Article 7: "All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination."*

*Article 9: "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."*

*Article 11: "(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence. (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not*

*constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed."*

*Article 12: "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks."*

*Article 13: "(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."*

*Article 17: "(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property."*

I chose the above articles specifically since consecutive Israeli governments have done the exact opposite of them to Palestinians, yet despite this, none of them has been held to account.

This didn't do any favours to Israel's image, which started to be seen as a serial abuser of human rights when it comes to its Palestinian natives. The countries that did not hold decision makers in Israel accountable for such breaches of basic human rights haven't done any favours to Israel either.

Anti-Zionism, Anti-Israelism and Anti-Judaism/Semitism combined were on the rise ever since. In 2013, the BBC did a poll about the most liked and most hated nations across the world (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22624104>), Israel finished at the bottom 4, next to North Korea, Iran and Pakistan.

The hostile Israeli actions and wrongdoings ever since its establishment has contributed significantly to the local and global negative views towards it. Actions taken by the people supposedly protecting the Jewish people.

## 19. “A Regime of Jewish Supremacy”

In their publication *“A regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is apartheid”*

([https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101\\_this\\_is\\_apartheid](https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid)),

B’tselem, an Israeli human rights group, stated the following main reasons for calling Israel a Jewish supremacist state with Apartheid regime:

- 1) Limiting immigration to Jewish people
- 2) Taking over land for Jews whilst crowding Palestinians in enclaves
- 3) Restriction of Palestinians’ freedom of movement
- 4) Denial of Palestinians’ right to political participation (Gaza and West Bank)

It’s one of the most interesting and on point publications by an Israeli human rights group. The most captivating part is the ending:

*“As painful as it may be to look reality in the eye, it is more painful to live under a boot. The harsh reality described here may deteriorate further if new practices are introduced – with or without accompanying legislation. Nevertheless, people created this regime and people can make it worse – or work to replace it. That hope is the driving force behind this position paper. How can people fight injustice if it is unnamed? Apartheid is the organizing principle, yet recognizing this does not mean giving up. On the contrary: it is a call for change.*

*Fighting for a future based on human rights, liberty and justice is especially crucial now. There are various political paths to a just future here, between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, but all of us must first choose to say no to apartheid.”*

Is anyone listening?

## 20. Umar II: “Justice and Truth will Set Them Right”

During the Caliphate period of Umar Ibn Abdul-Aziz in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, one of his governors from Khurasan sent him a letter asking for his permission to use force and violence against the population; “Only the sword and the whip can fix them” he said. Caliph Umar responded: “You lied, but justice and truth will set them right, so be fair to them, and know that God does not fix the work of the corrupters.”

He didn’t have to prevent him from using force, the Islamic armies were far more superior and already had control of great territories in what is now a combination of Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

However, Caliph Umar, who is referred to as Umar II and is considered one of the most just in Islamic history, had a much broader vision combined with high moral code and ethics, despite his very young age as a Caliph when he ruled between the ages of 34-37.

He wasn’t going to allow the temptation to use force to win him or his governors over, although he could easily use it. He was looking to truly implement justice, not just control by any means necessary.

Over 1300 years later, Muslims remained in Khurasan and expanded even further. There’s nothing that threatens their existence. The population merged with the new rulers and many of them converted to Islam willingly.

Ever since its establishment, Israel has been the most dangerous place not only for Palestinian Arabs, but for the Jewish people as well. It has the highest number of Jewish casualties or injured people due to war, conflicts or acts of terror.

Jewish people live under constant threat of being attacked, harassed or killed, mainly in and around settlements in the West Bank. The Israeli state is under constant threat of war.

Its aggression and injustice against Palestinians always hit back hard, right at home. The home that should be the ‘safe haven’ of Jewish people.

Has someone, somewhere, miscalculated the whole equation? Or was this all deliberate? How can most Israeli leaders throughout so many decades not understand that racism and injustice do not work? And why do they always get away with it?



## 21. The Violent Elements of the Conflict

Israel has always dehumanized Palestinians to justify its aggressive means to control them. Palestinians' self-defence included violence that is at times accompanied by the dehumanization of Jews.

The former leads to the latter and the cycle continues. As long as force remains the key in the equation of control and oppression, force will remain a key element in resisting them.

Both need to be gradually eliminated. To eradicate the reasons behind violent means used by Palestinians to defend themselves, Israel must stop using violence as means to control them.

Prior to it being legitimized by any religion or international law, it is pure human nature for a human being to defend himself. It's an inbuilt instinct that cannot be eradicated unless the threat is eradicated.

The non-violent solutions are here, they just need to be utilized. Whether inside Israel, Gaza or the West Bank.

Israel must gradually replace the violent and threatening language with incentives that motivate the other side to listen and understand that there's another way.

To build the trust, we must first demolish the walls.

## 22. Administrative Detention

One of Israel's most notorious methods of imprisonment is Administrative Detention.

In it, a person is held without trial without having committed an offense, on the grounds that he or she plans to break the law in the future.

As this measure is supposed to be preventive, it has no time limit. The person is detained without legal proceedings, by order of the regional military commander, based on classified evidence that is not revealed to them.

This leaves the detainees helpless – facing unknown allegations with no way to disprove them, not knowing when they will be released, and without being charged, tried or convicted.

([https://www.btselem.org/administrative\\_detention](https://www.btselem.org/administrative_detention))

At the end of September 2020, 376 Palestinians - including two minors - were held in administrative detention in Israel Prison Service (IPS) facilities.

([https://www.btselem.org/administrative\\_detention/statistics](https://www.btselem.org/administrative_detention/statistics))

This detention is reserved 'almost' solely to Palestinians, with one notable exception being an Israeli settler: Meir Ettinger.

Whereas with the Palestinians, you don't have to do anything to be arrested, in the case of Meir, he had already committed several acts of terror including arson against Palestinians, destroying crops, killing sheep and attacking a Church.

As an Israeli Jew, you basically need to be at the extreme part of the extreme, perform criminal and terrorist acts blatantly and boast about it to be held in administrative detention, merely.

As a Palestinian, you don't need any reason.

If you're Meir, you're held for 8 days under administrative detention. If you're an innocent Palestinian, the average is 6 months.

Many Administrative Detainees went on hunger strikes for prolonged periods, following which Israel stopped extending their detention, and in certain cases after receiving threats from armed Palestinian groups who said they will retaliate should their situation deteriorate or if they die as a result.

One of the most symbolic recent cases was that of Hisham Abu Hawwash, who went on a hunger strike for 141 days.

There were continuous solidarity campaigns for him, he was regularly visited by sympathizers, and some haters. He stopped his hunger strike just after Israel committed not to extend his detention, a decision that took place just days after the Islamic Jihad movement threatened escalation will follow should any harm happen to him.

## 23. House Demolitions and Expulsions

Israel regularly demolishes Palestinian house for various reasons and prevents Palestinians from building or expanding their properties. This is particularly the case in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

According to The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), Israel has demolished 131,000 Palestinian homes from 1947 up to 2021. 69,000 of which were post-Nakba. (<https://icahd.org/>)

Some were during the initial ethnic cleansing, some to expel families following this, some were due to military operations or against families of “convicted terrorists”.

Basically, capital punishment.

It is a policy that has been used ever since Israel’s establishment that predominantly targets innocent Palestinian natives of the land.

Israel uses it as a psychological warfare weapon and demotivating tool to expel Palestinians out of their homes.

That’s only what’s been demolished and does not include properties under threat of demolition.

This also doesn’t include expulsions, where Israeli forces either continuously pressure Palestinian families out of their homes by threats of legal action. They either do this by direct force or by offering them substantially high amounts of money, several times the cost of their home just to get them out and get Jewish settlers in.

## 24. The Military Industrial Complex

Since 1952, Israel has spent over 750B USD (That's 750,000,000,000) on military expansion. That's just the declared expense.

A large chunk of this money has been spent on military equipment from the US, following foreign military aid given to Israel from the US taxpayer.

The way US foreign military aid works is as follows:

- 1) US collects taxes from its citizens
- 2) They grant big parts of it to foreign countries on condition they buy weapons from US corporations
- 3) The beneficiaries follow the protocol
- 4) The arms corporations take the money

It's a highly profitable business that many people involved in try to protect and grow as much as possible.

The problem with this business is that it relies on wars, conflicts, terrorist threats (both real and fake), scaremongering and divisions between people. No wonder some of its biggest advocates are some of the most racist and bigoted people on earth.

Back to that amount of 750 billion USD; it's astonishing to say the least, almost 1 trillion USD (!) soon. Now take just 10% of that amount – 75 billion USD – and imagine it was spent on filling the gaps between Arabs and Jews across Israel / Palestine, developing much deprived Arab towns infrastructures, creating jobs, funding education properly, giving water and electricity access to everyone, funding bi-lingual organizations that build bridges between the two peoples.

Why does it all have to go to the military industry? How does that spending relate to political decisions? Should government policies change towards military spending and would there be repercussions?

Wouldn't it have made some sense, at least in terms of security to spend some money on preventative measures? At the end of the day, the biggest hostility that in many cases turns to violence against Israel is from either poor or

discriminated against communities, or both combined. Invest in them for a change, seeing there's so much money to spend.

People with better living conditions, more job opportunities, better financial situation have more to lose. When they have none of them, they have nothing to lose. The Palestinian reality is the latter.

## 25. Wars Should Really Be a Thing of The Past

Throughout history, humans have gradually become more civilized in resolution dispute. However, many are still barbaric to this day.

In the old days, violence was a much more popular means of obtaining what a person or nation wants. War was quite the norm when small political disputes happen between nations and countries.

Not long ago during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were two world wars. The deaths that resulted from WW1 was 20 million. WW2 took 70 million lives. These are astonishing numbers.

It didn't just end with world wars; mass genocides weren't uncommon. Over 10 million died as a result of Soviet actions and policies. Millions died from unnecessary aggressive US wars, some supported by many other countries.

The late Historian Eric Hobsbawm once noted: *"The 20th century was the most murderous in recorded history. The total number of deaths caused by or associated with its wars has been estimated at 187m, the equivalent of more than 10% of the world's population in 1913."*

For comparison, since the year 2000, an estimated 2.5m people died as a result of war. If people continue to die from wars at the same rate until the year 2100, the number expected would be around 11 million. By 2100, the world population is expected to be around 11 billion. That's 0.1% of the population.

Some wars are still ongoing, however with much less casualties than in previous times. This doesn't underestimate or devalue any loss of human life, however when you put it in context historically, there's significant improvement.

There are several reasons behind it; Europe, where the highest number of casualties took place in WW1 and WW2, understood very well that the costs of war are devastating for everyone.

The internet, mass popular media, instantly available information have increased dramatically in the past 20 years.

People from everywhere across the world can record live streams that are available for everyone, everywhere. This wasn't the case just over 10 years ago.

Technologies that were in the hands of few are now in the hands of many. The availability and openness of these technologies differ from one country to another, however from a global perspective, it's massively widespread.

Any action from any politician can be followed by immediate scrutiny from anyone with a social media account.

All of this puts more pressure on decision makers to comply with popular demand, especially when it comes to taking whole nations to wars. People took the streets in record numbers to protest against the barbaric wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in early 2000s. People protest to this day against wars all across the world.

Aggression has become less appealing for those in power and there are no signs that this is about to change.



## 26. The PsyWar Continues

Despite the facts mentioned in the last chapter, wars are still very much present. As does psychological warfare. It also always precedes the act of war or aggression, especially when it comes to nation states.

Encyclopaedia Britannica defines it as follows: “psychological warfare, also called psywar, the use of propaganda against an enemy, supported by such military, economic, or political measures as may be required.

Such propaganda is generally intended to demoralize the enemy, to break his will to fight or resist, and sometimes to render him favourably disposed to one’s position. Propaganda is also used to strengthen the resolve of allies or resistance fighters. The twisting of personality and the manipulation of beliefs in prisoners of war by brainwashing and related techniques can also be regarded as a form of psychological warfare.”

However, the above is only referring to the military side of psywar, when nowadays it’s used on a much larger scale.

“Various techniques are used and are aimed at influencing a target audience's value system, belief system, emotions, motives, reasoning, or behaviour. It is used to induce confessions or reinforce attitudes and behaviours favourable to the originator's objectives and are sometimes combined with black operations or false flag tactics. It is also used to destroy the morale of enemies through tactics that aim to depress troops' psychological states.

Target audiences can be governments, organizations, groups, and individuals, and is not just limited to soldiers. Civilians of foreign territories can also be targeted by technology and media so as to cause an effect in the government of their country.” (Wikipedia)

Israel has excelled throughout its history in psywar. It had to and still has to, because it has always been on the wrong side. And when you’re on the wrong side you need to invest a lot of time, money and resources in effort to sugar-coat and legitimize your crimes. History twisting, erasing and hiding historical facts, switching village and city names to Hebrew ones and attempting to change the Arabic names of Palestinian villages and cities, passing laws that criminalize the use of the term “Nakba” (Catastrophe in Arabic – in reference

to the war and exodus of 1948) through the Nakba Law and that consider Israel a national home for Jews only through the Nation-State Law.

The education system in Israel only includes the Zionist rhetoric to the events leading to and including 1948 and post it. Palestinians, including Israeli-Palestinians, are at many times portrayed as enemies and 5<sup>th</sup> column.

During a speech in the Israeli Knesset on Oct 13<sup>th</sup> 2021, MK Bezael Smotrich, leader of the Religious Zionism Party, told Arab MKs: “I do not talk to you anti-Zionists, terror-supporters, enemies. You are here by mistake because Ben-Gurion did not finish the job and did not throw you away in ’48. That is the truth.”

In 2015, Benjamin Netanyahu, who has been leading the largest party in Israel ‘Likud’ for many years, warned his voters that *“Arab voters are streaming in quantity to the polling stations”*.

To this day, many efforts are made to delegitimize or limit Arab political activity and power, despite apparent institutional celebration of it in front of the world to showcase the “democratic” rather than the “Jewish” side of Israel.

And despite the fact that an increasingly large number of Israeli Jews do indeed believe in and encourage political participation of the Palestinian minority in Israel in the political scene, there is a long way to go until it would be perceived as a basic right in the eyes of the general Jewish-Israeli population, rather than a fifth-column-enemy attempt to destroy the Jewish elements of Israel from within.

## 27. The Jewish Resistance

At the time around 200 BCE, the Seleucid Empire controlled parts of historical Palestine that was referred to as Judea at the time. It is referred to as the Hellenistic period, in between the death of Alexander the Great and the emergence of the Roman Empire.

Jews were split between the traditionalist Jews and the Hellenizing Jews, mainly consisting the more privileged, those who accepted a more Greek lifestyle.

Things however started to get heated when Antiochus came to power and started persecuting the traditionalist Jews and banning certain Jewish practices.

This increased the tension between Hellenizing Jews and traditionalist Jews that eventually led to a revolt by the Maccabees, led by Judah Maccabee.

Their resistance was mainly based on guerrilla warfare against the Seleucid Empire, although it was initially directed at the Hellenizing Jews.

The Maccabees are celebrated in Israel as heroes, having established the first “Land of Israel” that was called the Hasmonean dynasty back then.

In Israel, the name is commonly used in various areas, mainly sports. The Maccabiah games take place every four years and many football and basketball team names begin with “Maccabee”.

The question that comes to mind here is why does Israel not celebrate the Palestinian struggle for justice in the same manner it celebrates and glorifies the Maccabees struggle for justice?

At least some do.

## 28. Ex-IDF Soldier: “Palestinians Have a Right to Resist”

There are many Israelis who refuse to serve in the Israeli army. They are called ‘Sarvanim’ - objectors.

Eran Efrati is one of them, an ex-IDF soldier who describes his experience in the Israeli army in a very interesting and open interview with Empire Files under the title *“I Was the Terrorist”*. (<https://youtu.be/1Rk1dAlhiVc>).

During his interview, he describes in detail the level of injustice that is being done by the Israeli army in the West Bank, particularly in Hebron, a very sensitive area

He felt like he was terrorizing people during curfews, scaring people and instilling fear in their hearts.

Eran used to work with kids before joining the military, and during his role in Hebron, he saw kids petrified of him and that didn’t sit well with him. He loved kids and he wasn’t happy with the fact that by doing what he does he is scaring young innocent children.

His experience gave him an urge to speak up about the injustices the Palestinians face on a daily basis and he describes how he does not want to live in an Ethnocracy, but a country for all.

He also describes how the IDF elite units bypass the supreme court orders of executions by using loopholes, therefore performing ‘shoot-to-kill’ actions in an illegal manner and not being held accountable.

Eran adds how the Israeli soldiers dehumanize Palestinians even before service and how Jewish Arabs (Mizrahim) are the most tragic story of Zionism after the Palestinians, having being used following the need for more ‘Jewish’ people after the establishment of Israel and the migration of most European Jews to Israel.

He also adds how Israel erased their identity and prevented them from describing themselves as ‘Arab Jews’.

Eran describes how Israel constantly sells the idea that Palestinians only understand the use of force and claims that Israelis are the ones who only understand the use of force. He also expresses clear support for Palestinians to resist by any means necessary, having being a soldier in the IDF and seeing how Palestinians are mistreated on a daily basis and how there should be more international action to solve the situation.

Eran finishes his interview calling for a new state and equal system for everyone.

It's truly an eye-opening interview that you do not see on a normal day, especially with level of detail and honesty that is discussed in it.

The support for the Palestinian struggle and right to resist is global.

It is a moral, ethical human right and it is also a legal right under UN resolutions as we will see in the next chapter.

## 29. UN Resolutions That Support Resistance

Palestinian resistance movements have been illegally, immorally and hypocritically labelled as 'terrorists' by many countries.

This act isn't merely unethical and unjustified but is an outright shameless contradiction to UN resolutions that *order* such them do to the opposite and support people under occupation to resist.

One UN resolution (45/130) under the title "*Right of peoples to self-determination/Struggle by all available means – GA resolution*" unequivocally states the following:

*"Considering that the denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, sovereignty, independence and return to Palestine and **the brutal suppression by the Israeli forces of the heroic uprising, the intifadah, of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, as well as the repeated Israeli aggression against the population of the region, constitute a serious threat to international peace and security,***

*Bearing in mind Security Council resolutions 605 (1987) of 22 December 1987, 607 (1988) of 5 January 1988 and 608 (1988) of 14 January 1988 and General Assembly resolutions 43/21 of 3 November 1988, 43/177 of 15 December 1988 and 44/2 of 6 October 1989, on the deterioration of the situation of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories,*

*Deeply concerned and alarmed at the deplorable consequences of Israel's continuing acts of aggression against Lebanon and its continuing occupation of parts of southern Lebanon, as well as its refusal to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, in particular resolutions 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978,*

1. *Calls upon all States to implement fully and faithfully all the resolutions of the United Nations regarding the exercise of the right to self-determination and independence by peoples under colonial and foreign domination;*

**2. Reaffirms the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial domination, apartheid and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle;**

3. Reaffirms also the inalienable right of the Namibian people, the Palestinian people and all peoples under foreign occupation and colonial domination to self-determination, national independence, territorial integrity, national unity and sovereignty without foreign interference;

4. Strongly condemns those Governments that do not recognize the right to self-determination and independence of all peoples still under colonial domination, alien subjugation and foreign occupation, notably the peoples of Africa and the Palestinian people;

5. Calls upon Israel to refrain from deporting any Palestinian civilians from the occupied Palestinian territories and to release immediately all Palestinian detainees;

6. Strongly condemns the constant and deliberate violations of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, as well as the expansionist activities of Israel in the Middle East, which constitute an obstacle to the achievement of self-determination and independence by the Palestinian people and a threat to peace and stability in the region;

7. Urges all States, the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, as well as other international organizations, to extend their support to the Palestinian people through its sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, in its struggle to regain its right to self-determination and independence in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

## 30. A Non-Supremacist State

The country will have no supremacy by no one over no one.

The state's core must be built on principles derived from a wide array of universal values that bring people together, not separate them.

The current model of a Jewish-Democratic state has failed miserably. Jewish-Israeli society has no consensus on the definition of "Jewish". If you ask a secular and a religious person living in the same block of flats what does Jewish mean, their answers will differ completely.

Having a general consensus on the way a country is governed is essential for security and stability. If you do not have it you risk having a state with constant tension and a breeding-ground for civil unrest. Civil war in more severe cases.

Political systems that enable supremacy on any basis declare themselves unjust by default as they automatically result to inequality.

That doesn't mean you will find the solution simply by calling a state "Secular".

Look at France, a supposed hardcore Secular country, yet successive governments proved to be fascists when it comes to Muslim and African minorities and authoritarian when it comes to implementing the law on opposition, from imposing dressing codes on Muslim women and banning Muslims from basic faith practices whilst demonizing them at the same time.

The state needs its citizens and its citizens need it, therefore both the definition and political system of the state must reflect its citizens will in a way where both are serving each other equally. If, by definition, Israel remains a "Jewish" state that has a "Nation-state Law", it will remain for the Jews and alienate the non-Jews by default. Palestinian natives would still feel as strangers in their own land and treated as such. Having such a population with no incentive to support the state they live in very damaging for the state itself.



## 31. Gaza Under Siege

Following the one-sided Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, the Palestinians took full control and elections took place in 2006.

For the first time since its establishment, Hamas movement participated in the elections, and won by a landslide. One of their main reasons for participation is the fact that Israel withdrew from Gaza and the elections were uninterrupted, despite Israeli imprisonment of many Hamas candidates prior to the elections.

The elections were viewed as the most democratic in the Arab world and were monitored by several independent and international bodies, one of them was the Carter Centre.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter - who runs the organization, was personally monitoring the situation and was in Palestine during that time and made a report about his trip.

In his report, he states: "Hamas leaders had expressed their desire to form a unity government with Fatah and the smaller independent parties, but his (PA President Mahmoud Abbas) intention was not to cooperate with them. I urged him to reconsider."

From the moment Hamas won the elections, every attempt to take them down has been taken.

Israel started a siege on Gaza, former Egyptian regime closed the borders in Rafah, their biggest rival political party – whom they were keen on having a unity government with – made it impossible in every single way. They were asking for all key ministries despite them losing the elections.

Then came the coup attempt backed by US and Israel, where parts of Fatah movement participated to try and take Hamas down.

But the movement wasn't going to let that happen, and at the height of the coup attempt, they made a strategic decision to take their military wing "Izzeddeen Al-Qassam Brigades" to eliminate the coup, and they did.

However, since then, Gaza remained under siege and Israel committed several acts of aggression that led to several wars with Gaza.

As of 2020, 70% of Gazans under 30 are unemployed. 53% of the population live below the poverty line. 80% rely on external aid to survive. 27% of families live in homes that are hazardous to their health. 68% of the population can't be sure where their next meal is coming from. ([https://www.islamic-relief.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/RS209697\\_IR-Gaza2020-Web.pdf](https://www.islamic-relief.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/RS209697_IR-Gaza2020-Web.pdf))

During 2014 only, Israel killed 2,139 Palestinians, of which 490 were children. 11,000 Palestinians including 3,000 children were wounded. 20,000 civilian homes were destroyed and half a million residents displaced. For comparison, 71 Israelis were declared dead during that war, 64 of which were IDF soldiers. (<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-185919/>)

In late 2021, Israel completed the construction of a new under and over ground wall in Gaza worth \$1.1B, consisting of 140,000 tonnes of steel.

That's just a glimpse of the harsh reality the Israeli siege has made on Gaza and its people.

Yet despite the ongoing conflict and loss of life, there is a level of co-operation between Israel and Hamas that both parties might not like to admit.

For example, any goods entering Gaza from Israel need to be coordinated by both sides. They don't have ghosts telepathically passing information to one another, but people. And just as normal 'enemies' do, both sides should sit down and talk to each other without any terms.

Hamas have the biggest military force opposing Israel inside Israel and Palestine combined. It makes no sense for either party to reject direct talks as both are in need for solutions, and these must not come only by military means. They also surely won't come by either side claiming the right of ownership of everything in historical Palestine and the divine right to rule it, whether it be a land 'promised by God' or an 'Islamic endowment'.

A genuine, open dialogue should start taking place, even if not at top levels, to establish an understanding on how a solution can take place. Do this for the sake of the people on both sides who want a solution, not your political power or popularity.

## 32. “Israel is The Only National Home for Jews”

And it will remain their home, but in a much better, safer and more pleasant environment.

How can Citizen A fathom a ‘national home’ where Citizen B, resident of the same home, is deprived of his or her basic rights and holds constant grudges against Citizen A?

A successful national home is a home big enough and generous enough to contain all its inhabitants and feed them, care for them and nurture them equally. Not a home that locks part of them in a tiny room and prohibits them from moving out, dripping food and electricity to them bit by bit while the rest of the inhabitants roam freely and comfortably, with access to all the food and water.

Over 2 Million Palestinians in Gaza have no freedom of movement, the 3 Million in the West Bank have very limited freedom of movement. Most of them haven’t seen the beautiful coastline.

A national home isn’t where you teach your children about how they’re superior to the other race living in the same home just because they were born out of a certain womb, thus somehow entitled to more rights.

A good, beautiful national home is one where all its inhabitants share similar values of belonging and virtue, care for one another, are there for each other, share meals with each other and look out for one another.

Israel, or Shem as it may be called, will always be a national home for the Jews, but it shall also always be a national home for Christians, Muslims and followers of other faiths or no faiths.

It is big enough for everyone, it will welcome everyone.

It’s important to note that there’s also a very dangerous element in the sentence “Israel is the only national home for Jews”. It insinuates that Jews cannot have any other national home but in Israel. So Jews cannot call the UK,

US, Germany or any other part of the world for that matter where they were born and raised, a national home?

Human beings should be entitled to call whichever land they wish their national home.

### 33. Is Israel a Jewish State?

Before Israel's establishment and to this date, Zionist leaders continuously highlight the fact that Israel is a "Jewish and Democratic State". Note that Jewish always precedes Democratic.

And whilst one may have many comments and questions on how a state can be called both Jewish and Democratic and the problems that lie within that definition, I have an observation regarding the "Jewish" side of it.

Four of the 10 Commandments, which are considered fundamental in Judaism, state the following:

*Thou shalt not kill*

*Thou shalt not steal*

*Thou shall not bear false witness*

*You shall not covet\**

Not only has Israel been opposing these Commandments, but it rather based its existence on their total opposite.

*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* is another fundamental belief that is constantly being ignored by the supposed Jewish state.

So, is the state of Israel using the Jewish identity as a true reflection of its commitment to Judaism, or merely as a political tool to manipulate the masses and exploiting their religious identity?

*\*Covet: yearn to possess something, especially something belonging to another*

## 34. A Word about Zionism

If Zionism is restricted at being a belief that Jews have a right to have a homeland in historical Palestine/Israel, then I do not see why anyone should have a problem with it.

However, if your definition of Zionism also includes the belief that you can control a land against its peoples will by any means necessary, your superiority over others, the ideology that you should always be in power politically of that land, then it would be a much harder case to win. I would argue that this definition and implementation of Zionism is the primary reason behind the existence of movements like Hamas and the Islamic Jihad.

Zionism hasn't just sat there as a belief, it was established as a political nationalist movement with teeth and claws, aggressively working to get Jewish people from everywhere to live in one state at the expense of its original native people. They used to call Palestine "A land without people to a people without land".

They did not take into consideration anyone living there, just their means of establishing a state of their own.

No one is suggesting for one second that Jewish people should be politically inactive, lose political power, or not have the ability to govern the future united state. It also doesn't suggest that some Jews can't be better at governing than other non-Jews.

In fact, I strongly believe that if any Jewish leader in future would lead such a process to unite Israel and Palestine under one state, he or she will have an incredible popularity amongst Palestinian citizens.

The Jewish connection and love for this land will remain. The things that need to be corrected are the historical and contemporary wrongdoings made by the Zionist movement.

## 35. Political Movements Shouldn't Have Monopoly Over Religion

Over the recent years, the Zionist movement has been aggressively attempting to criminalize any criticism of it under the umbrella of Anti-Semitism.

In 2016, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (or IHRA) decided to adopt and promote the following 'working' definition of Anti-Semitism:

*"Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."*

So far, that definition sounds very accurate as it is, especially as it includes "non-Jewish individuals" which is a true reflection of Semitism, as its followers are not all Jewish.

I, for example, have a very good argument of being a Semite. A true native, descendant of natives of the region for centuries. I'd obviously have to take an accurate genetic test to start proving the accuracy of this, however none of us are 100% of any ethnicity.

But the IHRA definition didn't stop there, it added a list of examples:

*"Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.*

*Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:*

- *Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.*

- *Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.*
- *Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.*
- *Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).*
- *Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.*
- *Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.*
- *Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.*
- *Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.*
- *Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.*
- *Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.*
- *Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.”*

(<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>)

Out of the above 11 points, 7 include Israel.

This draws an extremely dangerous conclusion: That the IHRA has politicised Judaism and is using its definition of Anti-Semitism as a tool to provide political impunity to Israel.



33 countries, mostly Western, have adopted the definition of IHRA in addition to the UN and the EU.

In 2016, the Home Affairs Select Committee which is made up of cross-party MPs in the UK Parliament, asked the government to insert two “clarifications” to the IHRA definition and examples:

- It is not anti-Semitic to criticise the Government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest anti-Semitic intent.
- It is not anti-Semitic to hold the Israeli Government to the same standards as other liberal democracies, or to take a particular interest in the Israeli Government’s policies or actions, without additional evidence to suggest anti-Semitic intent.

The government rejected by saying *‘it believed that an existing caveat, that “criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic”, was “sufficient to ensure freedom of speech”.’*

The problem with that caveat is that it’s conditional; *‘similar to that levelled against any other country’*.

This implies that we cannot criticize Israel in a manner that reflects its actions, as Israeli actions are not similar to any other country, especially when it relates to the way it deals with and discriminates against Palestinians.

Despite the fact that the document is a non-legally binding working definition, pressure is being put amongst other nations and organizations to adopt it. This may well lead to future requests to make it legally binding, putting basic rights such as freedom of speech at risk.

Zionism mustn’t have monopoly over Judaism, in the same way that political Islamism mustn’t have monopoly over Islam.

## **36. Anti-Semitism vs. Anti-Zionism vs. Anti-Judaism**

I always believed it would be more accurate to call Anti-Semitism by the real meaning behind it: Anti-Judaism.

It's a despicable discrimination just like any other forms of racial and religious discriminations.

Semitism in its correct root relates to Shem, son of Noah and the territory his descendants inhabited that was later also referred to Canaan.

Therefore, if you want to follow the term Anti-Semitism you wouldn't be correct in including all Jews in it, some of them are pure Caucasians, and you cannot exclude non-Jews from it, such as indigenous inhabitants of historical Shem region from whatever religious background.

Hence it would be more accurate to call it Anti-Judaism.

Anti-Judaism as other religious discrimination and bigotry existed and still exists to this day.

It's a disease that we should completely remove from our societies. It should be completely unacceptable and challenged whenever heard.

If non-Jewish Palestinians (yes, there are Jewish Palestinians) refuse to be discriminated against based on ethnic and religious background, the same basis should apply to Jews. And vice-versa, if a Jew is avidly against Anti-Judaism or Anti-Semitism should it be the preferred term, then they should be avidly against racial discrimination of any kind and against Islamophobia, equally.

And by equally, I mean literally, equally against any discrimination of any kind towards anyone. No favouritism, no priorities.

Does this mean being discriminatory towards Israelis is acceptable? Obviously not. Israel includes different people from different backgrounds with different beliefs, faiths and a wide array of political views.

And Zionists? I wouldn't discriminate against anyone describing him or herself as a Zionist either. I would establish their view of Zionism, how they interpret it, question their moral justification of it.

If anyone, whether Zionist or Anti-Zionist, holds views and beliefs that include racial or religious superiority, legitimises discrimination, defends injustice and bigotry, they're automatically void.

Dialogue between people shouldn't be based solely on cherry-picking, character assassination and self-glamorization. Neither should it solely focus on historical atrocities and validation or invalidation based on a view that is subject to change.

Dialogue should be based on listening, understanding, responding in a civil manner. That's what distinguishes us from other animals.

But what about those who believe that God has promised them this land?

## 37. “To your offsprings I will give this land”

The Torah / Old Testament includes the following:

Genesis 12:1:

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you."

Genesis 12:7:

The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring [or seed] I will give this land."

The above is what many Zionists refer to when they try to legitimise their sole right to govern and control the land of Israel / Palestine.

I have a few of comments on that:

- 1) Everyone is entitled to believe what they want as long as they do not harm other people or take away their rights
- 2) This belief is restricted to some Jews and fractions of Christians. Followers of other faiths may not believe it, therefore should not be bound to it
- 3) If, for argument's sake, the belief is true, there is nothing in it that explicitly gives an indefinite right to every follower of the Jewish faith to "own", neither to "control" this land
- 4) It doesn't give them exclusivity over it
- 5) If they did control it politically, it surely doesn't give them an authority to take away other inhabitants rights
- 6) If you want to follow the statement "To a T", you'd have to prove you're a direct descendant of Abraham. And even then, the above applies.

At the end of the day, lands don't have religions and stones do not pray; people do.

On another side of the argument, Muslims and Palestinians are descendants of Abraham too. Are they not included in God's promise, if you interpret it to be that way?

### **38. Then Who Does It Belong to And What Political System Should Be Implemented?**

Simply all its citizens. All the people who love it and wish to live with it and have a connection to it.

That does not mean the future state should have a hostile approach towards religions, but the contrary; it should embrace good universal teachings that people agree on. Virtue, goodness, freedom, justice, mercy.

It should not fundamentally stick to a specific political system or ideology. Elements of Capitalism and Socialism could be embraced where they've been proven to be successful and productive.

Some elements of secular models that do not interfere with people's religious beliefs and are not hostile towards them could be embraced.

Reinventing the wheel shouldn't be a priority, the world already has many examples of political systems; we should take the best of them and implement them then constantly work on improving them.

Israel already has several systems in place that are functional and better than many other countries, although some of which like the judicial and enforcement systems that include systematic problems such as racism need to be corrected.

There should be strict laws on hate, discrimination and bigotry followed by harsh penalties for anyone from any background who commits them. Many politicians nowadays thrive on division and base their whole careers on hate speech. This must come to an end. Loudmouth bigots mustn't be able to take whole nations hostage to their ultra-narrow worldview and pure ignorance.

## 39. USDF

What do you do with two side that have always been fighting each other? Join them together.

The United State Defence Forces, made up of the Israeli military and Palestinian resistance movements.

At the end of the day, Israel did collaborate with PA armed forces following Oslo and had joint operations with them. These were forces made up of people wishing to and working towards ending Israel's existence. Sure, this proposal is taking it to a different level as we're talking about one force that includes everyone and is for everyone, rather than just a collaboration. However, the similarities are there, clearly.

It will be possible as it will be an army that will include, defend and treat each of its citizens equally.

The amount of people available to go to the army would mean that military service in Israel will no longer be compulsory for Jewish people or Druze and Circassians, it would be the end of conscription (mandatory military service).

Eliminating Conscription in Israel would solve the problem of not only those who do not wish to go to the army for any reason, but for those who do not wish to participate for religious reasons such as Orthodox Jews.

Muslims and Christians would be motivated to join this national army that would represent them and treat them as equals, defend them as it would defend Jews.

Between 1861 and 1865, American civil war casualties were estimated to be around 750,000.

(<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/09/110921120124.htm>)

The Israeli/Palestinian and Israeli/Arab conflict didn't reach anywhere near those levels. From 1920 to date, 29,129 Israeli Jews and 46,061 Palestinian Arabs were killed due to war and riots, excluding random acts of killings from both sides. A further 45,300 Egyptians were killed during Israel's previous wars

with Egypt and approximately 2,000 Lebanese during the wars with Lebanon. (<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/total-casualties-arab-israeli-conflict>).

Which means the total number of casualties of the Israeli Palestinian and Israeli Arab conflict is just over 120,000. Significantly less than US Civil War.

The reason I chose the US Civil war as a comparison is mainly to do with the reasons behind it; territorial disputes and abolition of slavery. The element of racism was obviously involved as well.

Although the US Civil War ended with the surrender of the Confederacy to the Union, this is not what we're suggesting to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

We're talking about two sides who view one another as inhumane terrorists. The level of mistrust and enmity between them is extremely high. Hamas and its allies will not surrender or give up their military and political power for nothing, and Israel won't tolerate one of its regions (or ex-regions) out of its control and used for hostile activities against it.

But this is now.

The future we're talking about will include Gaza and the West Bank and will grant all their citizens equal rights to Israeli Jews. The reasons for their resistance; right of return, full citizenship and equality will be accomplished, without further bloodshed from any side. From the Israeli/Jewish perspective, no one will be threatening the Jewish existence. It will be the most secure place for Jewish people. All the Israeli / Palestinian regions will be dissolved in the one state of Shem that will be for all its people.

Once you establish such a reality, you make what is currently impossible inevitable.

## 40. What Should Be the Name?

Israel as a state has many negative connotations that come with it. Israel as a name doesn't.

It is mentioned 2,431 times in the Bible, 2,344 of which in the Old Testament and 87 times in the New Testament.

(<https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?search=israel&version=NIV&searchtype=all>) It is mentioned 43 times in the Quran. (<http://holyquran.net/>)

Palestine is a very ancient name that refers to the people of the region, it was used for many centuries to describe this land too.

However, whenever you say Israel or Palestine nowadays, they both resemble the conflict that we're living in at present. People automatically take a step back, go quiet or go "oh" to resemble either solidarity or frustration that such injustice still exists.

Perhaps it's best not to use either, perhaps it should be called "Shem" or "Canaan", both of which are acceptable names more or less with Jewish, Muslim and Christian people. Or if you're hell bent on both Israel, and Palestine, the "United State of Israel and Palestine".

It might be important, it might not be at all. Should there be freedom, justice, liberty, peace and human rights for everyone in one state, would it really matter?

The focus on the name is mostly to do with national pride, when really and truly, pride shouldn't be based on nationality, but merit. Let's not let 'national pride' dictate our destiny and instead focus on what can make our destiny a better one.



## 41. Jerusalem

It's already very well-established that this city holds deep meanings in many people's hearts who follow all 3 major monotheistic religions.

Jerusalem has a very mystical element to it. Every time I go there, the ideal visit would include various holy sites to all three religions, Al-Aqsa, Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall.

It also has a very toxic vibe. There's a constant feeling of tension in the air, almost like a barrel of TNT that can explode at any moment.

Apart from major Churches, holy site visits for Jews and Muslims include various checks before entry and many people are banned from entering them. Al-Aqsa has both by Israeli forces outside its gates and Waqf guards inside it, making sure only 'Muslims' enter the site.

If you wish to go visit the Wall, you have to go through a thorough security check including a metal detector.

There's a constant sense of risk and feeling of insecurity. They somehow disappear when you enter one of your Holy sites and perform a prayer, but they don't go away.

Israel is adamant that Jerusalem is its eternal capital. All major Palestinian political groups striving for both one or two-state solutions are adamant its theirs as well and demand full control over it in any future solution, or at least East Jerusalem.

Both demands are unrealistic. Israel's relies solely on its belief and current power. The Palestinian side somehow thinks Israel will give it up, or that they can take it back by force and maintain it. The international community never recognized it as Israeli.

The initial UN partition plan for Palestine determined Jerusalem as an international city which is neither Jewish nor Arab.

The idea that this city should be under shared international control is very appealing, as long as no one has monopoly over it.

To accomplish that, several key issues must be agreed upon:

- 1) An umbrella agreement must be in place that everyone is bound by
- 2) There can be more thorough control to each religious group when it comes to holy sites, but one that does not cross the umbrella agreement
- 3) There must be a joint religious and international committee that constantly cooperates and monitors the situation on the ground and diffuses any potential frictions
- 4) Constant risk assessments need to take place to eliminate the risk of extremist actions from any side

If this can be achieved, it would form a major relief to all parties but mainly to the residents of Jerusalem, which is the largest mixed and not-so-coexistent city in Israel / Palestine.

Let's make this beautiful city the world capital of peace, as it should be.

## 42. Summary

While I was writing this book, a few moments had passed where I asked myself if there was a point in going ahead with it.

One of them when Israeli forces killed the famous Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, a Palestinian Christian born in Jerusalem who is much respected amongst Palestinians, in a targeted attack in Jenin (West Bank) and stormed her house following it. They used aggressive force and asked her family and loved ones not to raise Palestinian flags or chant anything relating to Palestine during her funeral.

As mourners were taking her body out of St. Joseph's Hospital in Jerusalem, Israeli forces brutally and mercilessly attacked the mourners, beating them and forcing her coffin to drop at one point.



(Maya Levin – Associated Press)

At that point I thought to myself: Can humanity can reach any lower than this? Combine that with almost weekly killings, detentions, arrests and the list goes

on. Just as that thought had passed, I realized just how important it is to continue despite the *seemingly* hopeless situation we're in.

And it's very easy to lose hope.

Successive Israeli regimes got away with more than just murder, and still do. That gives them no incentive to improve, reflect and change ways. The Palestinians on the other hand have given up on almost any external hope, they were betrayed by close ones and fake human rights champions further away.

However the people have no other option but to coexist, live together and seek justice and peace that serve everyone. That is the only way forward.

As a matter of fact, this is the general consensus amongst politicians in Israel at the moment, but contrary to what we're proposing in this book, they want the regime of supremacy, apartheid and status quo continue. Few politicians speak about the need to "separate from the Palestinians" when they know very well in their heart of hearts that it's impossible on more than one level.

Although Israel's democracy is very flawed, it still exists. At least within the ever-expanding and not-so-solid "Israeli" territories which exclude Gaza and the West Bank.

All this democracy needs is to be unleashed from the chains of ultra-nationalist, racist and supremacist chains that prevent it from reaching next door, to Gaza and the West Bank.

Offer all Palestinians full rights, the same rights you offer Jews who haven't seen or known Israel, and do not look back.

The future of a one state where everyone is equal in the eyes of the state is a goal worth sacrificing for, both from an Israeli and Palestinian perspective.

It is time to replace nationalism with humanism, supremacy with justice and ideologist blindness with open mindedness.

Our time on this earth is limited, do we not want to leave our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren a better place to live in?

Our lives deserve more than to be spent in constant conflict, fear and uncertainty.

The Palestinian people will never give up their rights and the Israelis will not give up their land.

It's time for both sides to start asking questions, reflect, looking at the demons within and work towards goals and values we all share and value.

Some may question the fact why I did not delve into the problems of Palestinian Authorities in the West Bank and Gaza, and the answer to that is that I am addressing the root of the problem, in addition to the fact that both authorities basic functioning depends fully on Israel.

Israel is constantly chasing after Arab countries to make peace treaties with it and has recently done so with several Arab countries.

It's time to make peace at home, offer citizens who depend on the rights that they deserve to live the life that they deserve, so both sides are able to live in peace and prosper, together.

In his 1902 utopian novel labelled "*Altneuland*" (old new land), Theodor Herzl wrote a phrase that is very popular amongst Zionists about the establishment of Israel: "*If you want it, it is no fairy-tale*" (Hebrew: *im tirtsu – en zo agada*).

It's safe to say that the same sentence applies to the continuation of Israel, but in a better, more refined and complete form. Perhaps in a different or amended name too, to reflect the identity of Palestinian natives as well.

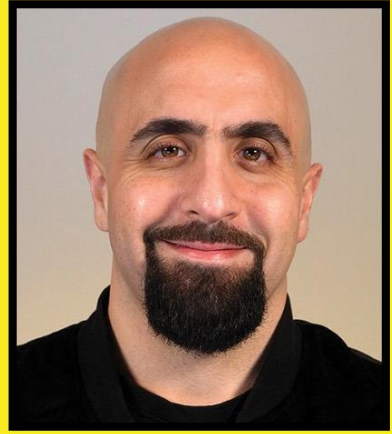
If the older generation of Zionists saw fit to do what they did to establish Israel, could contemporary Zionists have the level of wisdom and pragmatism to protect their land by addressing the wrongdoings and miscalculations of their ancestors?

If Palestinians receive their full rights and become full citizens of their own land with equal rights to all other citizens, would they be able to move on from the historical and current atrocities done to them by Israel for such a long time?

Most definitely.

رَبِّ يَسِّرْ وَلَا تَعَسِّرْ رَبِّ تَمِّمْ بِالْخَيْرِ

My Lord make it easy, not difficult, My Lord complete it with what is best



## About the author :

Mahmood OD is a native Palestinian born in Haifa, the most significant northern city in historical Palestine and modern day Israel.

After witnessing several wars and ongoing turmoil in his homeland, he decided to write this book in the hope that it could pave a path for a fully democratic, equal state across all historical Palestine where Jews, Christians, Muslims and followers of other or no faith would live in with full, equal human rights.

Throughout its history, Israel has repeatedly failed to offer a solution based on equality to the Palestinians. Continuing with more oppression will only lead to more resistance and more bloodshed.

This can be stopped, there is an alternative and the steps are straightfoward.